

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 23, 25-34 and 36-42 are present in this application. By this Amendment, claims 23, 25 and 28-30 have been amended, and claims 22 and 24 have been canceled. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Without conceding the propriety of the rejections in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Office Action, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 25, 28-34 and 36-39. By this Amendment, claim 25 has been rewritten in independent form, with the exception of a "wherein" clause in claim 22. Additionally, claims 29 and 30 have also been rewritten in independent form. Claims 22 and 24 have been canceled.

In view of the above amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections are moot. Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

Applicants additionally acknowledge the indication that claims 40-42 are allowed.

With regard to the Reasons for Allowance set forth in paragraph 6, Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner to any extent that such statement characterizes the invention in a manner at variance with the actual wording of the claims.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are patentable over the art of record and that the application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable in order to

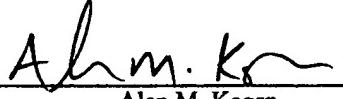
NAKAZAWA et al.
Appl. No. 09/771,942
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place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact
Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Prompt passage to issuance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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